

THE  
STATE OF THE NATION,

CONSIDERED IN

A SERMON FOR THANKSGIVING DAY,

PREACHED AT THE MELODEON, NOV. 28, 1850.

BY

THEODORE PARKER,

Minister of the xxviii. Congregational Society in Boston.

*(REPRINTED FROM THE PHONOGRAPHIC REPORT OF THE CHRONOTYPE.)*

BOSTON:  
WM. CROSBY AND H. P. NICHOLS.

MDCCCLI.

B O S T O N :  
THURSTON, TORRY, AND EMERSON,  
Printers, Devonshire Street.

# S E R M O N .

---

PROVERBS, XIV. 34.

RIGHTEOUSNESS EXALTETH A NATION, BUT SIN IS A REPROACH TO ANY  
PEOPLE.

WE come together to-day by the Governor's Proclamation, to give thanks to God for our welfare, not merely for our happiness as individuals or as families, but for our welfare as a people. How can we better improve this opportunity than by looking a little into the condition of the people? and accordingly I invite your attention to a sermon OF THE STATE OF THIS NATION. I shall try to speak of the Condition of the Nation itself, then of the Causes of that Condition, and in the third place of the Dangers that threaten, or are alleged to threaten, the Nation.

First, of our CONDITION. Look about you in Boston. Here are a hundred and forty thousand souls, living in peace and in comparative prosperity. I think, without doing injustice to the other side of the water, there is no city in the old world, of this population, with so much intelligence, activity, morality, order, comfort, and general welfare, and, at the same time, with so little of the opposite of all these. I know the faults of Boston, and I think I would not disguise them; the poverty, unnatural poverty, which shivers in the cellar; the unnatural wealth which

bloats in the parlor ; the sin which is hid in the corners of the jail ; and the more dangerous sin which sets up Christianity for a pretence ; the sophistry which lightens in the newspapers and thunders in the pulpit : — I know all these things and do not pretend to disguise them ; and still I think no city of the old world, of the same population, has so much which good men prize and so little which good men deplore.

See the increase of material wealth ; the buildings for trade and for homes ; the shops and ships. This year Boston will add to her possessions some ten or twenty millions of dollars, honestly and earnestly got. Observe the neatness of the streets, the industry of the inhabitants, their activity of mind, the orderliness of the people, the signs of comfort. Then consider the charities of Boston ; those limited to our own border, and those which extend farther, those beautiful charities which encompass the earth with their sweet influence. Look at the schools, a monument of which the city may well be proud, in spite of their defects.

But Boston, though we proudly call it the Athens of America, is not the pleasantest thing in New England to look at ; it is the part of Massachusetts which I like the least to look at, spite of its excellence. Look farther, at the whole of Massachusetts, and you see a fairer spectacle. There is less wealth at Provincetown in proportion to the numbers, but there is less want ; there is more comfort ; property is more evenly and equally distributed there than here, and the welfare of a country never so much depends upon the amount of its wealth as on the mode in which its wealth is distributed. In the State there are about one hundred and fifty thousand families — some 975,000 persons, living with a degree of comfort which, I think, is not anywhere enjoyed by such a population in the old world. They are mainly industrious, sober, intelligent and moral. Everything thrives ; agriculture, manufactures, commerce.

“The carpenter encourages the goldsmith ; he that smites the anvil, him that smootheth with the hammer.” Look at the farms where intelligent labor wins bread and beauty both out of the sterile soil and a climate not over-indulgent. Behold the shops all over the State ; the small shops where the shoemaker holds his work in his lap, and draws his thread by his own strong muscles ; and the large shops where machines, animate with human intelligence, hold with iron grasp their costlier work in *their* lap, and spin out the delicate staple of Sea Island cotton. Look at all this ; it is a pleasant sight. Look at our hundreds of villages, by river, mountain and sea ; behold the comfortable homes, the people well fed, well clad, well instructed. Look at the school-houses, the colleges of the people ; at the higher seminaries of learning ; at the poor man’s real college farther back in the interior, where the mechanic’s and farmer’s son gets his education, often poor, still something to be proud of. Look at the churches, where every Sunday the best words of Hebrew and of Christian saints are read out of this Book, and all men are asked, once in the week, to remember they have a Father in Heaven, a faith to swear by, and a Heaven to live for, and a Conscience to keep. I know the faults of these churches. I am not in the habit of excusing them, still I know their excellence, and I will not be the last man to acknowledge that. Look at the roads of earth and iron which join villages together, and make the State a whole. Follow the fisherman from his rocky harbor at Cape Ann ; follow the mariner in his voyage round the world of waters ; see the industry, the intelligence, and the comfort of the people. I think Massachusetts is a State to be thankful for. There are faults in her institutions and in her laws, that need change very much. In her form of society, in her schools, in her colleges, there is much which clamors loudly for alteration,—very much in her churches to be Christianized. These changes are going quietly forward, and will in time be brought about.

I love to look on this State, its material prosperity, its increase in riches, its intelligence and industry, and the beautiful results that are seen all about us to-day. I love to look on the face of the people, in halls and churches, in markets and factories ; to think of our great ideas ; of the institutions which have come of them ; of our schools and colleges, and all the institutions for making men wiser and better ; to think of the noble men we have in the midst of us, in every walk of life, who eat an honest bread, who love mankind and love God, who have Consciences they mean to keep, and Souls which they intend to save.

The great business of society is not merely to have farms, and ships, and shops, — the greater shops and the less, — but to have MEN ; men that are conscious of their manhood, self-respectful, earnest men, that have a faith in the living God. I do not think we have many men of genius. We have very few that I call great men — I wish there were more — but I think we have an intelligent, an industrious, and noble people here in Massachusetts, which we may be proud of.

Let us go a step further. New England is like Massachusetts in the main, with local differences only. All the North is like New England in the main ; this portion is better in one thing ; that portion worse in another thing. Our ideas are their ideas ; our institutions are the same. Some of the Northern States have institutions better than we. They have added to our experience. In revising their constitutions and laws, or in making new ones, they go beyond us, they introduce new improvements, and those new improvements will give those States the same advantage over us which a new mill, with new and superior machinery, has over an old mill, with old and inferior machinery. By and by we shall see the result, and take counsel from it, I trust.

All over the North we find the same industry and thrift, and similar intelligence. Here attention is turned to agri-

culture, there to mining ; but there is a similar progress and zeal for improvement. Attention is bestowed on schools and colleges, on academies and churches. There is the same abundance of material comfort. Population advances rapidly, prosperity in a greater ratio. Everywhere new swarms pour forth from the old hive, and settle in some convenient nook, far off in the West. So the frontier of civilization every year goes forward, further from the ocean. Fifty years ago it was on the Ohio ; then on the Mississippi ; then on the upper Missouri : presently its barrier will be the Rocky Mountains, and soon it will pass over that bar, and the tide of the Atlantic will sweep over to the Pacific — yea, it is already there ! The universal Yankee freights his schooner, at Bangor, at New Bedford, and at Boston, with bricks, timber, frame-houses, and other “ notions,” and by and by drops his anchor in the smooth Pacific in the bay of St. Francis. We shall see there, ere long, the sentiments of New England, the ideas of New England, the institutions of New England ; the school-house, the meeting-house, the court-house, the town-house. There will be the same industry, thrift, intelligence, morality, and religion, and the idle ground that has hitherto borne nothing but gold, will bear upon its breast a republic of men more precious than the gold of Ophir or the rubies of the East.

Here I wish I could stop. But this is not all. The North is not the whole nation ; New England is not the only type of the people. There are other States differing widely from this. In the Southern States you find a soil more fertile under skies more genial. Through what beautiful rivers the Alleghanies pour their tribute to the sea ! What streams beautify the land in Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi ! There genial skies rain beauty on the soil. Nature is wanton of her gifts. There rice, cotton, and sugar grow ; there the olive, the orange, the fig, all find a home. The soil teems with luxuriance.

But there is not the same wealth, nor the same comfort. Only the *ground* is rich. You witness not a similar thrift. Strange is it, but in 1840, the single State of New York alone earned over \$4,000,000 more than the six States of North and South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi! The annual earnings of little Massachusetts, with her 7,500 square miles, are \$9,000,000 more than the earnings of all Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina! The little county of Essex, with 95,000 souls in 1840, earned more than the large State of South Carolina, with 595,000!

In those States we miss the activity, intelligence, and enterprise of the North. You do not find the little, humble school-house at every corner; the frequent meeting-house does not point its taper finger to the sky. Villages do not adorn the margin of the mountain stream and sea; shops do not ring with industry; roads of earth and iron are poorer and less common. Temperance, morality, comfort are not there as here. In the slave States in 1840, there were not quite 302,000 youths and maidens in all the schools, academies, and colleges of the South; but in 1840, in the free States of the North there were more than 2,212,000 in such institutions! Little Rhode Island has 5000 more girls and boys at school than large South Carolina. The State of Ohio alone has more than 17,000 children at school beyond what the whole fifteen slave States can boast. The permanent literature of the nation all comes from the North; your historians are from that quarter—your Sparkses, your Bancrofts, your Hildreths, and Prescotts, and Ticknors; the poets are from the same quarter—your Whittiers, and Longfellows, and Lowells, and Bryants; the men of literature and religion—your Channings, and Irvings, and Emersons—are from the same quarter! Preaching—it is everywhere, and sermons are as thick almost as autumnal leaves; but who ever heard of a great or famous clergyman in a Southern

State? of a great and famous sermon that rang through the nation from that quarter? No man. Your Edwards of old time, and your Beechers, old and young, your Channing and Buckminster, and the rest, which throng to every man's lips — all are from the North. Nature has done enough for the South — God's cup of blessing runs over — and yet you see the result! But there has been no pestilence at the South more than at the North; no earthquake has torn the ground beneath their feet; no war has come to disturb them more than us. The government has never laid a withering hand on their commerce, their agriculture, their schools and colleges, their literature and their church.

Still, letting alone the South and the North as such, not considering either exclusively, we are one nation. What is a nation? It is one of the great parties in the world. It is a sectional party, having geographical limits; with a party organization, party opinions, party mottoes, party machinery, party leaders, and party followers; with some capital city for its party head-quarters. There has been an Assyrian party, a British, a Persian, an Egyptian, and a Roman party; there is now a Chinese party, and a Russian, a Turkish, a French, and an English party; these are also called nations. We belong to the American party, and that includes the North as well as the South; and so all are brothers of the same party, differing amongst ourselves — but from other nations in this, that we are the American party, and not the Russian nor the English.

We ought to look at the whole American party, the North and South, to see the total condition of the people. Now at this moment there is no lack of cattle and corn, and cloth in the United States, North or South, only they are differently distributed in the different parts of the land. But still there is a great excitement. Men think the nation is in danger, and for many years there has not been so great an outcry and alarm amongst the politicians. The cry is raised, "*The Union is in danger!*" and if the Union

falls, we are led to suppose that everything falls. There will be no more Thanksgiving days ; there will be anarchy and civil war, and the ruin of the American people ! It is curious to see this material plenty on the one side, and this political alarm and confusion on the other. This condition of alarm is so well known, that nothing more need be said about it at this moment.

II. Let me now come to the next point, and consider the CAUSES of our present condition. This will involve a consideration of the cause of our prosperity and of our alarm.

1. First, there are some causes which depend on God entirely ; such as the nature of the country, soil, climate, and the like ; its minerals, and natural productions ; its seas and harbors, mountains and rivers. In respect to these natural advantages, the country is abundantly favored, but the North less so than the South. Tennessee, Virginia and Alabama, certainly have the advantage over Maine, New Hampshire and Ohio. That I pass by ; a cause which depends wholly on God.

2. Then again, this is a wide and new country. We have room to spread. We have not to contend against old institutions, established a thousand years ago, and that is one very great advantage. I make no doubt that in crossing the ocean, our fathers helped forward the civilization of the world at least a thousand years ; I mean to say it would have taken mankind a thousand years longer to reach the condition we have attained in New England, if the attempt had of necessity been made on the soil of the old world and in the face of its institutions.

3. Then as a third thing, much depends on the peculiar national character. Well, the freemen in the North and South are chiefly from the same race, this indomitable Caucasian stock ; mainly from the same composite stock, the tribe produced by the mingling of Saxon, Danish and Norman blood. That makes the present English nation,

and the American also. This is a very powerful tribe of men, possessing some very noble traits of character; active and creative in all the arts of peace; industrious as a nation never was before; enterprising, practical; fond of liberty, fond also of law, capable of organizing themselves into great masses and acting with a complete concert and unity of action. In these respects, I think this tribe, which we will call the English tribe, is equal to any race of men in the world that has been or is; perhaps superior to any race that has been developed hitherto. But in what relates to the higher Reason and Imagination, to the Affections and to the Soul, I think this tribe is not so eminent as some others have been. North and South, the people are alike of Anglo-Norman descent.

4. Another cause of our prosperity, which depends a great deal on ourselves, is this; the absence of war and of armies. In France, with a population of less than forty millions, half a million are constantly under arms. The same state of things prevails substantially in Austria, Prussia, and in all the German states. Here in America, with a population of twenty millions, there is not one in a thousand that is a soldier or marine. In time of peace, I think we waste vast sums in military preparations, as we did in actual war not long since. Still, when I compare this nation with others, I think we have cause to felicitate ourselves on the absence of military power.

5. Again, much depends on the past history of the race, and here there is a wide difference between the different parts of the country. New England was settled by a religious colony. I will not say that all the men who came here from 1620 to 1650 were moved by religious motives; but the controlling men were brought here by these motives, and no other. Many who cared less for religious ideas, came for the sake of a great moral idea, for the sake of obtaining a greater degree of civil freedom than they had at home. Now the Pilgrims and the Puritans

are only a little ways behind us. The stiff ruff, the peaked beard, the "prophesying book" are only six or seven generations behind the youngest of us. The character of the Puritans has given to New England much of its present character and condition. They founded schools and colleges; they trained up their children in a stern discipline which we shall not forget for two centuries to come. The remembrance of their trials, their heroism, and their piety affects our preaching to-day, and our politics also. The difference between New England and New York, from 1750 to 1790, is the difference between the sons of the religious colony and the sons of the worldly colony. You know something of New York politics before the Revolution, and also since the Revolution; the difference between New York and New England politics at that time, is the difference between the sons of religious men and the sons of men who cared very much less for religion.

Just now when I said that all the North is like New England, I meant *substantially* so. The West is our own daughter. New England has helped people the Western part of the State of New York, and the best elements of New England character mingling with others, its good qualities will appear in the politics of that mighty State.

The South, in the main, had a very different origin from the North. I think few if any persons settled there for religion's sake; or for the sake of freedom in the State. It was not a moral idea which sent men to Virginia, Georgia and Carolina. "Men do not gather grapes of thorns." The difference of the seed will appear in the difference of the crop. In the character of the people of the North and South, it appears at this day. The North is not to be praised, nor the South to be blamed for this; they could not help it: but certainly it is an advantage to be descended from a race of industrious, moral and religious men; to have been brought up under their training, to have inherited their ideas and institutions,—and this is a

circumstance which we make quite too little account of. I pass by that.

6. There are other causes which depend on ourselves entirely. Much depends on the political and social organization of the people. There is no denying that government has a great influence on the character of the people; on the character of every man. The difference between the development of England and the development of Spain at this day, is mainly the result of different forms of government; for three centuries ago the Spaniards were as noble a race as the English.

A government is carried on by two agencies: the first is PUBLIC OPINION, and the next is PUBLIC LAW, — the fundamental law which is the Constitution, and the subsidiary laws which carry out the ideas of the Constitution. In a government like this, public opinion always precedes the laws; overrides them, takes the place of laws when there are none, and hinders their execution when they do not correspond to public opinion. Thus the public opinion of South Carolina demands that a free colored seaman from the North shall be shut up in jail, at his employer's cost. The public opinion of Charleston is stronger than the public law of the United States on that point — stronger than the Constitution — and nobody dares execute the laws of the United States in that matter. These two things should always be looked at to understand the causes of a nation's condition — the public opinion, as well as the public law. Let me know the opinions of the men between twenty-five and thirty-five years of age, and I know what the laws will be.

Now in public opinion and in the laws of the United States, there are two distinct political ideas. I shall call one the Democratic, and the other the Despotic idea. Neither is wholly sectional; both chiefly so. Each is composed of several simpler ideas. Each has enacted laws and established institutions. This is the Democratic idea:

That all men are endowed by their Creator with certain natural rights which only the possessor can alienate ; that all men are equal in these rights ; that amongst them is the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness ; that the business of the government is to preserve for every man all of these rights until he alienates them.

This Democratic idea is founded on human nature, and comes from the nature of God who made human nature. To carry it out politically is to execute Justice which is the will of God. This idea, in its realization, leads to a Democracy, — a government of all, for all, by all. Such a government aims to give every man all his natural rights ; it desires to have political power in all hands, property in all hands, wisdom in all heads, goodness in all hearts, religion in all souls. I mean the religion that makes a man self-respectful, earnest, and faithful to the infinite God, that disposes him to give all men their rights, and to claim his own rights at all times ; the religion which is piety within you, and goodness in the manifestation. Such a government has laws, and the aim thereof is to give Justice to all men ; it has officers to execute these laws, for the sake of Justice. Such a government founds schools for all ; looks after those most who are most in need ; defends and protects the feeblest as well as the richest and most powerful. The State is for the individual, and for all the individuals, and so it reverences Justice, where the rights of all, and the interests of all, exactly balance. It demands free speech ; everything is open to examination, discussion, "agitation," if you will. Thought is to be free ; speech to be free ; work to be free, and worship to be free. Such is the Democratic idea, and such the State which it attempts to found.

The Despotic idea is just the opposite : — That all men are *not* endowed by their Creator with certain natural rights which only the possessor can alienate, but that one man has a natural right to overcome and make use of some

other men for his advantage and their hurt ; that all men are *not* equal in their rights ; that all men have *not* a natural right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness ; that government is *not* instituted to preserve these natural rights for all.

This idea is founded on the excess of human passions, and it represents the compromise between a man's idleness and his appetite. It is not based on facts eternal in human nature, but on facts transient in human nature. It does not aim to do Justice to all, but injustice to some ; to take from one man what he ought not to lose, and give to another what he ought not to get.

This leads to Aristocracy in various forms, to the government of all by means of a part and for the sake of a part. In this state of things political power must be in few hands ; property in few hands ; wisdom in few heads ; goodness in few hearts, and religion in few souls. I mean the religion which leads a man to respect himself and his fellow-men ; to be earnest, and to trust in the infinite God ; to demand his rights of other men and to give their rights to them.

Neither the democratic nor the despotic idea is fully made real anywhere in the world. There is no perfect democracy, nor perfect aristocracy. There are democrats in every actual aristocracy ; despots in every actual democracy. But in the Northern States the democratic idea prevails extensively and chiefly, and we have made attempts at establishing a democratic government. In the Southern States the despotic idea prevails extensively and chiefly, and they have made attempts to establish an aristocracy. In an aristocracy there are two classes : the People to be governed, and the Governing Class, the nobility which is to govern. This nobility may be *movable*, and depend on wealth ; or *immovable*, and depend on birth. In the Southern States the nobility is immovable, and depends on color.

In 1840, in the North there were ten million free men, and in the South five million free men and three million slaves. Three-eighths of the population have no human rights at all — rights as cattle, not as men. There the slave is protected by law, as your horse and your ox, but has no more human rights.

Here, now, is the great cause of the difference in the condition of the North and South ; of the difference in the material results, represented by towns and villages, by farms and factories, ships and shops. Here is the cause of the difference in schools, colleges, churches, and in the literature ; the cause of the difference in men. The South, with its depotic idea, dishonors labor, but wishes to compromise between its idleness and its appetite, and so kidnaps men to do its work. The North, with its democratic idea, honors labor ; does not compromise between its idleness and its appetite, but lays its bones to the work to satisfy its appetite ; instead of kidnapping a man who can run away, it kidnaps the elements, subdues them to its command, and makes them do its work. It does not kidnap a freeman, but catches the winds, and chains them to its will. It lays hands on fire and water, and breeds a new giant, which “courses land and ocean without rest,” or serves while it stands and waits, driving the mills of the land. It kidnaps the Connecticut and the Merrimac ; does not send slave-ships to Africa, but engineers to New Hampshire ; and it requires no Fugitive Slave Law to keep the earth and sea from escaping, or the rivers of New England from running up hill.

This is not quite all ! I have just now tried to hint at the causes of the difference in the condition of the people, North and South. Now let me show the cause of the Agitation and alarm. We begin with a sentiment ; that spreads to an idea ; the idea grows to an act, to an institution ; then it has done its work.

Men seek to spread their sentiments and ideas. The

Democratic idea tries to spread; the Despotie idea tries to spread. For a long time the nation held these two ideas in its bosom, not fully conscious of either of them. Both came here in a state of infancy, so to say, with our fathers; the Democratic idea very dimly understood; the Despotie idea not fully carried out, yet it did a great mischief in the State and Church. In the Declaration of Independence, writ by a young man, only the Democratic idea appears, and that idea never got so distinctly stated before. But mark you, and see the confusion in men's minds. That Democratic idea was thus distinctly stated by a man who was a slave-holder almost all his life; and unless public rumor has been unusually false, he has left some of his own offspring under the influence of the despotic and not the democratic idea; slaves and not free men.

In the Constitution of the United States these two ideas appear. It was thought for a long time they were not incompatible; it was thought the great American party might recognize both, and a compromise was made between the two. It was thought each might go about its own work and let the other alone; that the hawk and the hen might dwell happily together in the same coop, each lay her own eggs and rear her own brood, and neither put a claw upon the other!

In the mean time each founded institutions after its kind; in the Northern States, democratic institutions; in the Southern, aristocratic. What once lay latent in the mind of the nation has now become patent. The thinking part of the nation sees the difference between the two. Some men are beginning to see that the two are completely incompatible, and cannot be good friends. Others are asking us to shut our eyes and not see it, and they think that so long as our eyes are shut, all things will go on peacefully. Such is the wisdom of the ostrich.

At first the trouble coming from this source was a very little cloud, far away on the horizon, not bigger than a

man's hand. It seemed so in 1804, when the brave senator from Massachusetts, a Hartford Convention Federalist—a name that calls the blood to some rather pale cheeks now-a-days—proposed to alter the Constitution of the United States, and cut off the North from all responsibility for slavery. It was a little cloud not bigger than a man's hand,—now it is a great cloud which covers the whole hemisphere of heaven, and threatens to shut out the day.

In the last session of Congress, ten months long, the great matter was the contest between the two ideas. All the newspapers rung with the battle. Even the pulpits now and then alluded to it; forgetting their decency, that they must preach “only religion,” which has not the least to do with politics and the welfare of the State.

Each idea has its allies, and it is worth while to run our eye over the armies and see what they amount to. The idea of Despotism has for its allies:—

(1.) The slave-holders of the South and their dependents; and the servile class who take their ideas from the prominent men about them. This servile class is more numerous at the South than even at the North.

(2.) It has almost all the distinguished politicians of the North and South; the distinguished great politicians in the Congress of the nation, and the distinguished little politicians in the Congresses of the several States.

(3.) It has likewise the greater portion of the wealthy and educated men in many large towns of the North; with their dependents and the servile men who take their opinions from the prominent class about them. And here, I am sorry to say, I must reckon the greater portion of the prominent and wealthy clergy, the clergy in the large cities. Once this class of men were masters of the rich and educated; and very terrible masters they were in Madrid and in Rome. Now their successors are doing penance for those old sins. “It is a long lane,” they say, “which has no turn,” and the clerical has had a very short

and complete turn. When I say the majority of the clergy in prominent situations in the large cities, are to be numbered among the allies of the despotic idea, and are a part of the great pro-slavery army, I know there are some noble and honorable exceptions, men who do not fear the face of gold, but reverence the face of God.

Then on the side of the Democratic idea there are: —

(1.) The great mass of the people at the North; farmers, mechanics and the humbler clergy. This does not appear so at first sight, because these men have not much confidence in themselves, and require to be shaken many times before they are thoroughly waked up.

(2.) Beside that there are a few politicians at the North who are on this side; some distinguished ones in Congress, some less distinguished ones in the various legislatures of the North.

(3.) Then there are men, North and South, who look at the great causes of the welfare of nations, and make up their minds historically, from the facts of Human History, against despotism. Then there are such as study the great Principles of Justice and Truth, and judge from Human Nature, and decide against despotism. And then such as look at the Law of God, and believe Christianity is sense and not nonsense; that Christianity is the ideal for earnest men, not a pretence for a frivolous hypocrite. Some of these men are at the South; the greater number are in the North; and here again you see the difference between the son of the Planter and the son of the Puritan.

Here are the allies, the three-fold armies of Despotism on the one side, and of Democracy on the other.

Now it is not possible for these two ideas to continue to live in peace. For a long time each knew not the other, and they were quiet. The men who clearly knew the despotic idea, thought, in 1787, it would die "of a rapid consumption;" they said so; but the culture of cotton has

healed its deadly wound, at least for the present. After the brief state of quiet, there came a state of armed neutrality. They were hostile, but under bonds to keep the peace. Each bit his thumb, but neither dared say he *bit it at the other*. Now the neutrality is over; attempts are made to compromise, to compose the difficulty. Various peace measures were introduced to the Senate last summer; but they all turned out war measures, every one of them. Now there is a trial of strength between the two. Which shall recede? which be extended? Freedom or slavery? That is the question, refuse to look at it as we will,—refrain or refrain not from “Political agitation,” that is the question.

In the last Congress it is plain the democratic idea was beaten. Congress said to California, “You may come in, and you need not keep slaves unless you please.” It said, “You shall not bring slaves to Washington for sale, you may do that at Norfolk, Alexandria, and Georgetown, it is just as well, and this ‘will pacify the North.’” Utah and New Mexico were left open to slavery, and 50,000 or 70,000 square miles and \$10,000,000 were given to Texas lest she should “dissolve the Union,”—without money or men! To crown all, the Fugitive Slave Bill became a law.

I think it is very plain that the democratic idea was defeated, and it is easy to see why. The three powers which are the allies of the despotic idea, were ready, and could act in concert—the Southern slave-holders, the leading politicians, the rich and educated men of the Northern cities, with their appendages and servile adherents. But since then, the conduct of the people in the North, and especially in this State, shows that the nation has not gone that way yet. I think the NATION never will; that the idea of freedom will never be turned back in this blessed North. I feel sure it will at last overcome the idea of slavery.

I come to this conclusion, firstly, from the character of

the tribe ; this Anglo-Norman-Saxon tribe loves law, deliberation, order, method ; it is the most methodical race that ever lived. But it **LOVES LIBERTY**, and while it loves law, it loves law chiefly because it *keeps* liberty ; and without that it would trample law under foot.

See the conduct of England. She spent \$100,000,000 in the attempt to wipe slavery from the West Indies. She keeps a fleet on the coast of Africa to keep down the slave-trade there — where we also have, I think, a sloop-of-war. She has just concluded a treaty with Brazil for the suppression of the slave-trade in that country, one of her greatest achievements in that work for many years.

See how the sons of the Puritans, — as soon as they came to a consciousness of what the despotic idea was, — took their charters and wiped slavery clean out, first from Massachusetts, and then from the other States, one after another. See how every Northern State, in revising its Constitution, or in making a new one, declares all men are created equal, that all have the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Then the religion of the North demands the same thing. Professors may try to prove that the Old Testament establishes slavery ; that the New Testament justifies the existence of slavery ; that Paul's epistle to Philemon was nothing more than another fugitive slave law ; that Paul himself sent back a runaway ; but it does not touch the religion of the North. We know better. We say if the Old Testament does that and the New Testament, so much the worse for them both. We say, let us look and see if Paul was so benighted, and we can judge for ourselves that the professor was mistaken more than the apostle.

Again, the spirit of the age, which is the Public Opinion of the Nations, is against slavery. It was broken down in England, France, Italy, and Spain ; it cannot stand long against civilization and good sense ; against the political economy and the religious economy of the civilized world.

The genius of freedom stands there, year out, year in, and hurls firebrands into the owl's nest of the Prince of darkness, continually, — and is all this with no effect?

Besides that, it is against the Law of God. That guides this universe, treating with even-handed Justice the great geographical parties, Austrian, Roman, British or American, with the same Justice wherewith it dispenses its blessings to the little local factions that divide the village for a day, marshalling mankind forward in its mighty progress towards wisdom, freedom, goodness towards men, and piety towards God.

Of the final issue I have no doubt; but no man can tell what shall come to pass in the mean time. We see that political parties in the State are snapped asunder: whether the national party shall not be broken up, no man can say. In 1750, on the 28th day of November, no man in Old England or New England could tell what 1780 would bring forth. No man, North or South, can tell to-day what 1880 will bring to pass. He must be a bold man who declares to the nation that no new political machinery shall be introduced, in the next thirty years, to our national mill. We know not what a *day* shall bring forth, but we know that God is on the side of Right and Justice, and that they will prevail so long as God is God.

Now, then, to let alone details, and generalize into one all the causes of our condition, this is the result: — **WE HAVE FOUND WELFARE JUST SO FAR AS WE HAVE FOLLOWED THE DEMOCRATIC IDEA, AND ENACTED JUSTICE INTO LAW.** We have lost welfare so far as we have followed the despotic idea, and made iniquity into a statute. So far as we have re-affirmed the ordinance of nature and re-enacted the will of God, we have succeeded. So far as we have refused to do that, we have failed. Of old it was written, "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people."

III. And now a word of our DANGERS. There seems no danger from abroad ; from any foreign State, unless we begin the quarrel ; none from famine. The real danger, in one word, is this, that WE SHALL TRY TO ENACT INJUSTICE INTO A LAW, AND WITH THE FORCE OF THE NATION TO MAKE INIQUITY OBEYED.

See some of the special forms of injustice which threaten us, or are already here. I shall put them into the form of ideas.

1. One, common among politicians is, that the State is for a portion of the people, not the whole. Thus it has been declared that the Constitution of the United States did not recognize the three million slaves as citizens, or extend to them any right which it guarantees to other men. It would be a sad thing for the State to declare there was a single child in the whole land to whom it owed no protection. What, then, if it attempts to take three millions from under its shield ? In obedience to this false idea, the counsel has been given that we must abstain from all "Political agitation" of the most important matter before the people. We must leave that to our masters, for the State is for them, it is not for you and me. They must say whether we shall "agitate" and "discuss" these things or not. The politicians are our masters, and may lay their fingers on our lips when they will.

2. The next false idea is, that government is chiefly for the protection of property. This has long been the idea on which some men legislated, but on the 19th day of this month the distinguished Secretary of State, in a speech at New York, used these words : "The great object of government is the protection of property at home and respect and renown abroad." You see what the *policy* must be where the Government is for the protection of the hat, and only takes care of the head so far as it serves to wear a hat. Here the man is the accident, and the dollar is the substance for which the man is to be protected. I think a

notion very much like this prevails extensively in the great cities of America, North and South. I think the chief politicians of the two parties are agreed in this,—that government is for the protection of property, and every thing else is subsidiary. With many persons politics are a part of their business; the State House and the Custom House are only valued for their relation to trade. This idea is fatal to a good government.

Think of this, that “The great object of government is the protection of property.” Tell that to Samuel Adams, and John Hancock, and Washington, and the older Winthrops, and the Bradfords and Carvers! Why! it seems as if the buried majesty of Massachusetts would start out of the ground, and with its Bible in its hand say, *This is false!*

3. The third false idea is this; that you are morally bound to obey the law, let it be never so plainly wrong and opposed to your conscience. This is the most dangerous of all the false ideas yet named. Ambitious men, in an act of passion, make iniquity into a law, and then demand that you and I, in our act of prayer, shall submit to it and make it our daily life; that we shall not try to repeal and discuss and agitate it! This false idea lies at the basis of every despot’s throne, the idea that men can make right wrong, and wrong right. It has come to be taught in New England, to be taught in our churches—though seldom there, to their honor be it spoken, except in the churches of Commerce in the large towns—that if wrong is law, you and I must do what it demands, though Conscience declares it is treason against man and treason against God. The worst doctrines of Hobbes and Filmer are thus revived.

I have sometimes been amazed at the talk of men who call on us to keep the fugitive slave law, one of the most odious laws in a world of odious laws—a law not fit to be made or kept. I have been amazed that they

should dare to tell us the law of God, writ on the heavens and our hearts, never demanded we should disobey the laws of men! Well, suppose it were so. Then it was old Daniel's duty at 'Darius' command to give up his prayer; but he prayed three times a day, with his windows up. Then it was John's and Peter's duty to forbear to preach of Christianity; but they said, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye." Then it was the duty of Amram and Jochebed to take up their new-born Moses and cast him into the Nile, for the law of king Pharoah, commanding it, was "constitutional," and "political agitation" was discountenanced as much in Goshen as in Boston. But Daniel did not obey; John and Peter did not fail to preach Christianity; and Amram and Jochebed refused "passive obedience" to the king's decree! I think it will take a strong man all this winter to reverse the judgment which the world has passed on these three cases. But it is "innocent" to try. However, there is another ancient case, mentioned in the Bible, in which the laws commanded one thing and Conscience just the opposite. Here is the record of the law:—"Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that if any one knew where he [Jesus] were, he should show it that they might take him." Of course, it became the official and legal business of each disciple who knew where Christ was, to make it known to the authorities. No doubt James and John could leave all and follow him, with others of the people who knew not the law of Moses, and were accursed; nay the women, Martha and Mary, could minister unto him of their substance, could wash his feet with tears, and wipe them with the hairs of their head. They did it gladly, of their own free will, and took pleasure therein, I make no doubt. There was no merit in that—"Any man can perform an agreeable duty." But there was found one disciple who could "perform a disa-

greeable duty." He went, perhaps "with alacrity," and betrayed his Saviour to the marshal of the district of Jerusalem, who was called a centurion. Had he no affection for Jesus? No doubt, but *he* could conquer his prejudices, while Mary and John could not.

Judas Iscariot has rather a bad name in the Christian world; he is called "the son of perdition," in the New Testament, and his conduct is reckoned a "transgression;" nay, it is said the devil "entered into him," to cause this hideous sin. But all this it seems was a mistake; certainly, if we are to believe our "Republican" lawyers and statesmen, Iscariot only fulfilled his "constitutional obligations." It was only "on that point," of betraying his Saviour, that the constitutional law required him to have anything to do with Jesus. He took his "thirty pieces of silver"—about *fifteen* dollars—a Yankee is to do it for *ten*, having fewer prejudices to conquer—it was his legal fee, for value received. True, the Christians thought it was "the wages of iniquity," and even the Pharisees—who commonly made the commandment of God of none effect by their traditions—dared not defile the temple with this "price of blood;" but it was honest money; it was as honest a fee as any American commissioner or deputy will ever get for a similar service. How mistaken we are! Judas Iscariot is not a traitor; he was a great patriot; he conquered his "prejudices," performed "a disagreeable duty," as an office of "high morals and high principle;" he kept the "law" and the "constitution," and did all he could to save the "Union;" nay, he was a saint, "not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles." "The law of God never commands us to disobey the law of man." *Sancte Iscariote ora pro nobis.*

It is a little strange to hear this talk in Boston, and hear the doctrine of passive obedience to a law which sets Christianity at defiance, taught here in the face of the Adamses, and Hancock, and Washington! It is amazing

to hear this talk, respecting such a law, amongst merchants. Do they keep the usury laws? I never heard of but one *money-lender* who kept them, and he has been a long time dead, and I think he left no kith nor kin! The temperance law, — is that kept? The fifteen-gallon law, — were men so very passive in their obedience to that, that they could not even “agitate?” yet it violated no law of God — was not unchristian. When the government interferes with the rum-sellers’ property, the law must be trod under foot, but when the law insists that a man shall be made a slave, I must give up Conscience in my act of prayer, and stoop to the vile law men have made in their act of passion!

It is curious to hear men talk of law and order in Boston, when the other day one or two hundred smooth-faced boys, and youths beardless as girls, could disturb a meeting of three or four thousand men, for two hours long, and the Chief of the Police, and the Mayor of the City stood and looked on, when a single word from their lips might have stilled the tumult and given honest men a hearing.

Talk of keeping the Fugitive Slave Law! Come, come, we know better. Men in New England know better than this. *We know that we ought not to keep a wicked law, and that it must not be kept when the Law of God forbids!*

But the effect of a law which men cannot keep without violating Conscience is always demoralizing. There are men who know no higher law than the statute of the State. When good men cannot keep a law that is base, some bad ones will say, “Let us keep no law at all,” — then where does the blame lie? On him that enacts the outrageous law.

The idea that a statute of man frees us from obligation to the law of God, is a dreadful thing. When that becomes the deliberate conviction of the great mass of the

people, North or South, then I shall despair of human nature; then I shall despair of Justice, and despair of God. But it will never come.

One of the most awful spectacles I ever saw, was this: A vast multitude attempting, at an orator's suggestion, to howl down the "higher law," and when he said, Will you have this to rule over you? they answered, "never!" and treated the "higher law" to a laugh and a howl! It was done in Faneuil Hall; under the eyes of the three Adamsses' Hancock, and Washington; and the howl rung round the venerable arches of that hall! I could not but ask, "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing, and the rulers of the earth set themselves, and kings take counsel against the Lord and say, 'Let us break his bands asunder, and cast off his yoke from us?'" Then I could not but remember that it was written, "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision. He taketh up the isles as a very little thing, and the inhabitants of the earth are as grasshoppers before Him." Howl down the law of God at a magistrate's command! Do this in Boston! Let us remember this — but with charity.

Men say there is danger of disunion, of our losing fealty for the Constitution. I do not believe it yet! Suppose it be so. The Constitution is the machinery of the national mill; and suppose we agree to take it out and put in new — we might get worse, very true, but we might get better. There have been some modern improvements; we might introduce them to the State as well as the mill. But I do not believe there is this danger. I do not believe the people of Massachusetts think so. I think they are strongly attached to the Union yet, and if they thought "the Union was in peril — this day," and everything the nation prizes was likely to be destroyed, we should not have had a meeting of a few thousands in Faneuil Hall, but the people would have filled up the city of Worcester

with a hundred thousand men, if need be ; and they would have come with the cartridge-box at their side, and the firelock on their shoulder. That is the way the people of Massachusetts would assemble if they thought there was real danger.

I do not believe the South will withdraw from the Union, with five million free men and three million slaves. I think Massachusetts would be no loser, I think the North would be no loser ; but I doubt if the North will yet allow them to go if so disposed. Do you think the South is so mad as to wish it ?

But I think I know of one cause which may dissolve the Union — one which ought to dissolve it, if put in action : that is, a serious attempt to execute the Fugitive Slave Law, here and in all the North. I mean an attempt to recover and take back all the fugitive slaves in the North, and to punish with fine and imprisonment all who aid or conceal them. The South has browbeat us again and again. She has smitten us on the one cheek with “protection,” and we have turned the other, kissing the rod ; she has smitten that with “free trade.” She has imprisoned our citizens ; driven off, with scorn and loathing, our officers sent to ask Constitutional Justice. She has spit upon us. Let her come to take back the fugitives — and, trust me, she “will wake up the lion.”

In my humble opinion, this law is a wedge — sharp at one end, but wide at the other — put in between the lower planks of our Ship of State. If it be driven home, we go to pieces. But I have no thought that that will be done quite yet. I believe the great politicians who threatened to drive it through the gaping seams of our argosy, will think twice before they strike again. Nay, that they will soon be very glad to bury the wedge “where the tide ebbs and flows four times a day.” I do not expect this of their courage, but of their fears ; not of their Justice — I am

too old for that — but of their concern for property which it is the “great object of government” to protect.

I know how some men talk in public, and how they act at home. I heard a man the other day, at Faneuil Hall, declare the law must be kept, and denounce, not very gently, all who preached or prayed against it, as enemies of “all law.” But that was all talk, for this very man, on that very day, had violated the law; had furnished the golden wheels on which fugitives rode out of the reach of the arms which the marshal would have been sorry to lift. I could tell things more surprising — but it is not wise just now!

I do not believe there is more than one of the New England men who publicly helped the law into being, but would violate its provisions; conceal a fugitive; share his loaf with a runaway; furnish him golden wings to fly with. Nay, I think it would be difficult to find a magistrate in New England, willing to take the public odium of doing the official duty. I believe it is not possible to find a regular jury who will punish a man for harboring a slave, for helping his escape, or fine a marshal or commissioner for being a little slow to catch a slave. Men will talk loud in public meetings, but they have some Conscience after all, at home. And though they howl down the “higher law” in a crowd, yet Conscience will make cowards of them all, when they come to lay hands on a Christian man, more innocent than they, and send him into slavery forever! One of the commissioners of Boston talked loud and long, last Tuesday, in favor of keeping the law. When he read his litany against the law of God, and asked if men would keep the “higher law,” and got “NEVER” as the welcome and *amen* for response — it seemed as if the law might be kept, at least by *that* commissioner and such as gave the responses to his creed. But slave-hunting Mr. Hughes, who came here for two of

our fellow-worshippers, in his Georgia newspaper, tells a different story. Here it is, from the "Georgia Telegraph" of last Friday. "I called at 11 o'clock at night, at his [the commissioner's] residence, and stated to him my business, and asked him for a warrant, saying that if I could get a warrant, I could have the negroes [William and Ellen Craft] arrested. He said *the law did not authorize a warrant to be issued* : that it was *my duty to go and arrest the negro without a warrant*, and bring him before him!" This is more than I expected. "Is SAUL among the prophets!" The men who tell us that the law must be kept, God willing, or against His will — there are Puritan fathers behind them also ; Bibles in their houses ; a Christ crucified whom they think of ; and a God even in their world, who slumbers not, neither is weary, and is as little a respecter of parchments as of persons ! They know there is a People as well as Politicians, a Posterity not yet assembled, and they would not like to have certain words writ on their tomb-stone. "Traitor to the Rights of Mankind," is no pleasant epitaph. They too remember there is a day after to-day ; aye, a Forever ; and "Inasmuch as ye have not done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have not done it unto me," is a sentence they would not like to hear at the day of judgment !

Much danger is feared from the "political agitation" of this matter. Great principles have never been discussed without great passions, and will not be, for some time, I suppose. But men fear to have this despotic idea become a subject of discussion. Last Spring, Mr. Webster said, here in Boston, "We shall not see the legislation of the country proceed in the old harmonious way, until the *discussion* in Congress and out of Congress, upon the subject [of slavery] *shall be in some manner suppressed*. Take that truth home with you !" We have lately been told that political agitation on this subject *must be stopped*. So it seems this law, like that which Daniel would not keep,

is one that may not be changed, and must not be talked of.

Now there are three modes in which attempts may be made to stop the agitation.

1. By sending

“ — troops, with guns and banners,  
Cut short our speeches and our necks,  
And break our heads to mend our manners.”

That is the Austrian way, which has not yet been tried here, and will not be.

2. By sending lecturers throughout the land to stir up the people to be quiet, and agitate them till they are still ; to make them sign the pledge of total abstinence from the discussion of this subject. That is not likely to effect the object.

3. For the friends of silence to keep their own counsel — and this seems as little likely to be tried as the others to succeed.

Strange is it to ask us to forbear to talk on a subject which involves the welfare of 20,000,000 men ! As well ask a man in a fever not to be heated, and a consumptive person not to cough, to pine away and turn pale. Miserable counsellors are ye all, who give such advice. But we have seen lately — the Lion of the Democrats, and the Lamb of the Whigs lie down together, joined by this opinion so gentle and so loving, all at once, that a little child could lead them, and so “fulfil the sure prophetic word.” Yes, we have seen the Herod of one Party and the Pilate of the other made friends for the sake of crucifying the Freedom of Mankind.

But there is one way in which, I would modestly hint, that we might stop all this talk “in Congress and out of Congress,” that is, to “discuss” the matter till we had got at the truth, and the whole truth ; then to “agitate” politically, till we had enacted Justice into law, and carried it

out all over the North, and all over the South. Then there would be no more discussion about the Fugitive Slave Bill, than about the "Boston Port Bill;" no more agitation about American Slavery, than there is about the condition of the people of Babylon before the flood. I think there is no other way in which we are likely to get rid of this discussion.

---

Such is our Condition, such its Causes, such our Dangers. Now, for the lesson, look a moment elsewhere. Look at continental Europe, at Rome, Austria, Prussia, and the German States—at France. How uncertain is every government! France—the stablest of them all! Remember the revolution which two years ago shook those States so terribly, when all the royalty of France was wheeled out of Paris in a street cab. Why are those States so tottering? Whence those revolutions? They tried to make iniquity their law, and would not give over the attempt! Why are the armies of France 500,000 strong, though the nation is at peace with all the world? Because they tried to make injustice Law! Why do the Austrian and German monarchs fear an earthquake of the people? Because they tread the people down with wicked laws! Whence came the crushing debts of France, Austria, England? From the same cause; from the injustice of men who made mischief by law!

It is not for men long to hinder the march of human freedom. I have no fear for that, ultimately,—none at all,—simply for this reason, that I believe in the infinite God. You may make your statutes; an appeal always lies to the higher law, and decisions adverse to that get set aside in the ages. Your statutes cannot hold Him. You may gather all the dried grass and all the straw in both continents; you may braid it into ropes to bind down the

sea ; while it is calm, you may laugh, and say, "Lo, I have chained the ocean !" and howl down the law of Him who holds the universe as a rosebud in his hand — its every ocean but a drop of dew. "How the waters suppress their agitation," you may say. But when the winds blow their trumpets, the sea rises in his strength, snaps asunder the bonds that had confined his mighty limbs, and the world is littered with the idle hay ! Stop the human race in its development and march to freedom ? As well might the boys of Boston, some lustrous night, mounting the steeples of this town, call on the stars to stay their course ! Gently, but irresistibly, the Greater and the Lesser Bear move round the pole ; Orion, in his mighty mail, comes up the sky ; the Bull, the Ram, the Heavenly Twins, the Crab, the Lion, the Maid, the Scales, and all that shining company, pursue their march all night, and the new day discovers the idle urchins in their lofty places, all tired, and sleepy, and ashamed.

It is not possible to suppress the idea of freedom, or forever hold down its institutions. But it is possible to destroy a State ; a political party with geographical bounds may easily be rent asunder. It is not impossible to shiver this American Union. But how ? What clove asunder the great British Party, one nation once in America and England ? Did not our fathers love their father-land ? Aye. They called it home, and were loyal with abundant fealty ; there was no lack of piety for home. It was the attempt to make old English injustice New England law ! Who did it, — the British people ? Never. Their hand did no such sacrilege ! It was the merchants of London, with the "Navigation Act ;" the politicians of Westminster with the "Stamp Act ;" the tories of America — who did not die without issue — who for office and its gold would keep a king's unjust commands. It was they, who drove our fathers into disunion against their will. Is here no lesson ? We love law, all of us love it ; but a true man

loves it only as the safeguard of the Rights of Man. If it destroy these Rights, he spurns it with his feet. Is here no lesson? Look farther then.

Do you know how Empires find their end? Yes, the great States eat up the little. As with fish, so with nations. Aye, but how do the great States come to an end? By their own injustice, and no other cause. They would make unrighteousness their law, and God wills not that it be so. Thus they fall; thus they die. Look at these ancient States, the queenliest queens of earth. There is Rome, the widow of two civilizations,—the Pagan and the Catholic. They both had her, and unto both she bore daughters and fair sons. But, the Niobe of Nations, she boasted that her children were holier and more fair than all the pure ideas of Justice, Truth, and Love, the offspring of the eternal God. And now she sits there, transformed into stone, amid the ruins of her children's bones. At midnight I have heard the owl hoot in the Coliseum and the Forum, giving voice to desolation; and at midday I have seen the fox in the palace where Augustus gathered the wealth, the wit, the beauty and the wisdom of a conquered world, and the fox and the owl interpreted to me the voice of many ages, which came to tell this age, that **THOUGH HAND JOIN IN HAND, THE WICKED SHALL NOT PROSPER.**

Come with me, my friends, a moment more, pass over this Golgotha of human history, treading reverent as you go, for our feet are on our mothers' grave, and our shoes defile our fathers' hallowed bones. Let us not talk of them; go further on, look and pass by. Come with me into the Inferno of the nations, with such poor guidance as my lamp can lend. Let us disquiet and bring up the awful shadows of empires buried long ago, and learn a lesson from the tomb.

Come, old Assyria, with the Ninevitish Dove upon thy emerald crown. What laid thee low? "I fell by my own

injustice. Thereby Nineveh and Babylon came, with me, also, to the ground."

Oh queenly Persia, flame of the nations, wherefore art thou so fallen, who trodest the people under thee, bridgedst the Hellespont with ships, and pouredst thy temple-wasting millions on the western world? "Because I trod the people under me, and bridged the Hellespont with ships, and poured my temple-wasting millions on the western world. I fell by my own misdeeds!"

Thou muselike, Grecian queen, fairest of all thy classic sisterhood of States, enchanting yet the world with thy sweet witchery, speaking in art, and most seductive song, why liest thou there with beauteous yet dishonored brow, reposing on thy broken harp! "I scorned the Law of God; banished and poisoned wisest, justest men; I loved the loveliness of flesh, embalmed it in the Parian stone; I loved the loveliness of thought, and treasured that in more than Parian speech. But the beauty of Justice, the loveliness of Love, I trod them down to earth! Lo, therefore have I become as those Barbarian States—as one of them!"

Oh manly and majestic Rome, thy seven-fold mural crown, all broken at thy feet, why art thou here? 'Twas not injustice brought thee low; for thy Great Book of Law is prefaced with these words, Justice is the unchanging, everlasting will to give each man his Right! "'Twas not the saint's ideal; it was the hypocrite's pretence! I made iniquity my law. I trod the nations under me. Their wealth gilded my palaces,—where thou mayst see the fox and hear the owl,—it fed my courtiers and my courtizans. Wicked men were my cabinet councillors,—the flatterer breathed his poison in my ear. Millions of bondmen wet the soil with tears and blood. Do you not hear it crying yet to God? Lo here have I my recompense, tormented with such downfall as you see! Go back and tell the

new-born child, who sitteth on the Alleghanies, laying his either hand upon a tributary sea, a crown of thirty stars about his youthful brow — tell him that there are Rights which States must keep, or they shall suffer wrongs! Tell him there is a God who keeps the black man and the white, and hurls to earth the loftiest realm that breaks His just, eternal law! Warn the young Empire that he come not down dim and dishonored to my shameful tomb! Tell him that Justice is the unchanging, everlasting will to give each man his Right. I knew it, broke it, and am lost. Bid him to know it, keep it, and be safe!”

“God save the Commonwealth,” proclaims the Governor! God will do His part, — doubt not of that. But you and I must *help* Him save the State. What can we do? Next Sunday I will ask you for your charity; to-day I ask a greater gift, more than the abundance of the rich, or the poor widows’ long remembered mite. I ask you for your JUSTICE. Give that to your native land. Do you not love your country? I know you do. Here are our homes and the graves of our fathers; the bones of our mothers’ are under the sod. The memory of past deeds is fresh with us; many a farmer’s and mechanic’s son inherits from his sires some cup of Manna gathered in the wilderness, and kept in memory of our Exodus; some stones from the Jordan, which our fathers passed over sorely bested and hunted after; some Aaron’s rod, green and blossoming with fragrant memories of the day of small things when the Lord led us — and all these attach us to our land, our native land. We love the great ideas of the North, the institutions which they founded, the righteous laws, the schools, the churches too — do we not love all these? Aye. I know well you do. Then by all these, and more than all, by the dear love of God, let us swear THAT WE WILL KEEP THE JUSTICE OF THE ETERNAL LAW. Then are we all safe. We know not what a day may bring forth,

but we know that Eternity will bring everlasting peace. High in the Heavens, the pole-star of the world, shines Justice ; placed within us as our guide thereto is Conscience. Let us be faithful to that

“ Which, tho’ it trembles as it lowly lies,  
Points to the light that changes not in heaven.”

71.2009 084.09633

